

A striking male character of *Uleiota planata* (L.) (Col.: Cucujidae) overlooked in British works

I think it worth drawing attention to a remarkable sexual character in this beetle, upon which our standard authors – notably Fowler (1889; *Coleoptera of the British Islands*, Vol. 3) and Joy (1932; *A practical handbook of British beetles*) – are silent, a fact possibly not unconnected with the great rarity of the insect as British in their time. In the male, a pair of slender sickle-shaped horns, upraised and incurved, arise from the extreme base of the mandibles; making it a matter of the upmost ease to distinguish the sexes. The horns are blunt, of equal thickness throughout, yellowish or at all events paler than the adjacent parts. In my British males they are more conspicuous and less mandible-like than in the figure of that sex in Freude, Harde and Lohse (1967; *Die Käfer Mitteleuropas* 7: 93).– A.A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London SE7 8QG.

***Rhodometra sacraria* (Linn.) (Lep.: Geometridae) – flight time**

The finding of a male specimen of *Rhodometra sacraria* in the light-trap here from the very misty night of 11 October 1995 raised again the question of the usual flight-time for this species (Aston, 1994, *Ent. Rec.* 106: 195). On a night when the mist gathered heavily and early it seems likely that the insect flew in soon after dark: that crepuscular habit was noted in Suffolk in 1947, both on stubble and at house-light, but the 1994 evidence here seemed at variance. It would, however, appear that the insect is mainly observed at dusk or soon after dark.– ALASDAIR ASTON, Wake's Cottage, Selborne, Hampshire GU34 3JH.

Two uncommon *Ptenidium* spp. (Col.: Ptiliidae) at Oxleas Wood, West Kent

P. intermedium Wank.: one in dry bed of stream under debris of cut bracken, 10.x.1985. A fairly typical habitat for this rather rare but widespread riparian species, and doubtless the nearest occurrence to the metropolis so far.

P. gressneri Er.: discovered in some numbers (9.vii.1986) in damp and rather sappy wood-mould and decayed wood in a partly hollow oak; not found again, but has not since been properly worked for and is almost certainly still present. (The tree has been a productive one for insects over the years.) Again, the situation is typical for *P. gressneri* (and also for *P. turgidum* Thoms., which did not occur). This should be the first record in the immediate environs of London of the former species, classed as a grade 2 old-forest indicator.– A.A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London SE7 8QG.